



## THE MULBERRY HOUSE SCHOOL

*This policy should be read and considered in conjunction with the Induction Checklist, Safeguarding Statement, Equal Opportunities, Race Equality and Inclusion Policies*

# SAFER RECRUITMENT AND INDUCTION POLICY

**This Policy of The Mulberry House School applies to all sections of the school including the Early Years Foundation Stage**

This policy is written in accordance with the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe In Education' September 2025, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' March 2026, the 'Equality Act' October 2010 and the 'SEND Code of Practice' January 2015.

### **Our Commitment**

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, parents and carers to share this commitment. This commitment underpins all recruitment, induction, supervision and ongoing professional conduct within the school.

### **Purpose of the Policy**

We aim to create a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, have adopted robust recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children.

### **Responsibility**

It is the School's policy that the Headteacher is responsible for recruitment in conjunction with the school's Directors, Recruitment Manager and Deputy Headteacher, as supported by the Headteacher's PA and members of the Senior Leadership Team.

The Headteacher, Directors, Recruitment Manager and Deputy Headteacher will act reasonably in making any decisions about the suitability of a prospective employee based on checks and evidence, including DBS checks and Barred List checks, together with references and interview information.

Safer recruitment at The Mulberry House School is recognised as the first step in an ongoing safeguarding process that continues through induction, supervision and professional development.

### **Training**

At least one of the school's Directors, as well as the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Recruitment Manager and Headteacher's PA (as involved in the recruitment process) will hold a safer recruitment training certificate, as issued by High Speed Training or The National College. At an interview, at least one member of staff interviewing will hold a safer recruitment training certificate. All training is refreshed regularly, and in line with any changes to national guidance.



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### **Equal Opportunities**

The school complies with the Equality Act 2010 with particular regard to those persons with protected characteristics. The School is committed to applying its equal opportunities policy at all stages of recruitment and selection. The School aims to ensure that all adverts are non-discriminatory on the basis of sex, race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religious or similar philosophical belief, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, political convictions, membership or non-membership of a Trade Union, age, pregnancy and maternity or “spent convictions of ex-offenders”, either in working or intent.

Any candidate with a disability will not be excluded unless it is clear that the candidate does not meet the minimum criteria outlined in the job specification. Reasonable adjustments to shortlisting in the recruitment process will be made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of his/her disability.

No recruitment decision will be based on health or disability unless it directly impacts the individual’s ability to carry out the role. As with shortlisting above, reasonable adjustments will always be considered.

All academic qualifications should be listed as “or equivalent” so that they are not limited to people who have taken British qualifications only.

### **Identification of a Vacancy / Advertisement of a Position**

The advert will specify:

- ◆ The position
- ◆ A brief description of the school
- ◆ The school’s commitment to safer recruitment practice
- ◆ The school’s commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and that all roles involve responsibility for this
- ◆ That pre-employment checks will be undertaken before appointment
- ◆ The safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and job specification
- ◆ Whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020
- ◆ The closing date for applications
- ◆ The application process
- ◆ The School requires all applicants to undergo an enhanced DBS check
- ◆ Application forms will only be accepted
- ◆ We expect all adults to share our commitment to safeguarding and the health and wellbeing of our pupils



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It is the School's policy that most internal vacancies will be emailed to the whole school, unless a subject specialist is required. Existing employees are to be encouraged to apply for vacant posts if they have the appropriate qualifications, experience and skills.

The Headteacher and Recruitment Manager will decide whether it is appropriate to post the vacancy also in a newspaper/job centre, or place it with an approved employment agency.

Relevant qualifications and experience for each role will be listed/highlighted on the job advertisement.

The School aims at all times to recruit the person who is most suited to the particular job. Recruitment will be solely on the basis of the applicant's abilities and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the job. Qualifications, experience and skills will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the job.

Those wishing to apply for the position are asked to request a candidate pack and job description. This will describe the duties, responsibilities and level of seniority associated with the post, whilst the employee specification will describe the type of qualification(s), training, knowledge, experience, skills, aptitudes and competencies required for effective performance of the job. Application forms will only be accepted to ensure there are no gaps in work history.

Candidates will be asked not to leave any gaps in their application and to include full time or part time education or training and any periods of unemployment including periods for raising a family. Applications will be scrutinised for any discrepancies/anomalies/gaps in employment and noted to explore if candidates are considered for short-listing.

### **Pre-Interview Checks**

Those shortlisted for interview will need to provide the details of two named referees and must complete the school's Staff Suitability Self-Declaration form. References must be sought prior to interview. One referee must be the present or most current employer. Candidates will be informed that the school reserves the right to approach any of their previous employers for a reference. If their last post did not include working with children, a reference will be sought from the employer by whom they were most recently employed to work with children. The reference form includes a statement asking referee's if there are any concerns about the person's ability to work with children. References must confirm this as well as dates worked and their reason for leaving as a minimum requirement. If the reference received is from a senior member of staff, the Recruitment Manager or Headteacher must confirm that the reference is accurate in respect to any disciplinary investigations. The school will verify that electronic references originate from a legitimate source. In addition, as part of the shortlisting process we may consider carrying out an online search as part of our due diligence on any shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school may want to explore with the application prior to



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interview. Any information arising from online searches will be explored sensitively with the candidate where relevant to their suitability to work with children.

Candidates will also be required to bring photo ID, right to work in the UK, copies of original qualifications and an original copy of their most recent DBS where held.

All applicants should be asked whether they have any special requirements, either due to disability or otherwise, on being invited to interview, and any reasonable adjustments required should be made.

### **Interview**

Any request for job share, flexible working arrangements or part time work should be considered, if suitable for the position.

When conducting recruitment interviews, the interviewers will ensure that the questions they ask job applicants are not in any way discriminatory or unnecessarily intrusive. Candidates will be asked about their suitability to work with children. Interview questions will include exploration of safeguarding understanding, professional boundaries and attitudes towards child welfare. The interview will focus on the needs of the job and skills needed to perform it effectively. A record of every recruitment interview will be made and passed to the Headteacher's PA, where it will be retained for no longer than six months. On no account should any job offer be made during or at the end of an interview.

Two senior members of staff will conduct the interviews, one of whom will usually be the Headteacher. This is to ensure that the best person for the position is selected solely on the basis of suitability and ability. Notes are taken to record responses to interview questions.

Any selection methods used, e.g. psychometric tests, aptitude tests, should be considered with regard to relevance and as to whether they could cause indirect discrimination.

Interview candidates will be given a tour of the relevant working areas, e.g. classes, kitchen and lunch spaces, and/or the whole school.

Class Teacher candidates are required to teach a lesson or activity. Early Years Practitioner candidates are required to read a story and engage with the children in a child initiated activity.

### **Job Offer**

After successful interviews, the Headteacher will first telephone the successful candidate or the recruitment agency to verbally offer the position and the salary.

Upon verbal acceptance by the candidate, the School will write confirming the offer, salary agreed, and start date. The School will produce a contract of employment as well as a job offer letter. The employee must sign and return both copies. The conditional offer of employment is subject to all pre-employment checks being completed. These have been listed below.



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- ◆ Identity check, where possible, birth certificate must be provided as one of the forms of identification
- ◆ Proof of address
- ◆ A barred list check from a regulated activity will be carried out before a candidate starts employment at the school
- ◆ A prohibition from teaching check
- ◆ If applicable prohibition from management (section 128) check
- ◆ Staff suitability self-declaration including declaration of physical and mental health (any declaration of physical or mental health relates solely to fitness to carry out the role, and is considered in line with the Equality Act 2010)
- ◆ Reference checks (minimum 2)
- ◆ Employment History
- ◆ An enhanced DBS check
- ◆ Right to work in the UK
- ◆ For overseas applicants, further checks from their country of origin (police good conduct letter) verification of qualifications.
- ◆ Applicants, who have spent more than 3 months in a country outside the UK within the last five years; or since the age of 16, will need to provide a police certificate or a certificate of good conduct from those countries.
- ◆ A check of professional qualifications and use the DfE's online services to verify any award of qualified teacher status (QTS), and the completion of teacher induction or probation.

All applicants must show their original DBS certificate to the school before taking up their post. A copy is never taken or kept on file, although a record of their DBS number, who applied for it and the issue date is recorded on the Single Central Register (SCR).

Should there be a delay in DBS clearance, a Risk assessment **must** be carried out for the period that the DBS is outstanding, and **all other checks** must be completed including a separate barred list check. The employee must not have unsupervised access to children at any time. Once a DBS is received, the applicant would be required to show the original DBS certificate to their employer as soon as reasonably practical. The employer will note down the DBS number but **not** photocopy or keep the original.

Before starting at the school, the member of staff will complete online safeguarding training before meeting pupils and read and declare that they understand the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. During their induction period, they will also meet with the DSL or DDSL to receive further safeguarding training.



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### **External employment**

Staff should always provide the Headteacher's contact information for external references. Employees at The Mulberry House School are not able to provide external references for their colleagues and should always pass this on to the Headteacher.

### **DBS Update Service**

Candidates that join the DBS Update Service and provide consent at interview stage, the School will ensure to confirm the certificate matches the individual's identity and examine the original certificate to ensure that it is for the appropriate workforce and level of check, e.g. enhanced certificate/enhanced including barred list information. The School would then carry out an online check and their own DBS check if the one provided was not an enhanced check or is more than 3 years old.

### **Induction and Probationary Period**

Whenever possible, where all onboarding checks have been completed, new members of staff are invited to spend a paid period of handover time, working alongside the existing team to familiarise themselves with the staff and children they will be working with in the future.

During the preliminary visit, the Team Leader will make the new member of staff welcome, oversee the induction process and use the Induction Checklist to help staff in understanding their roles and responsibilities. The school's computer network will be explained to the new member of staff and they will be shown where to find all relevant admin and record keeping documentation associated with their role, as well as being shown the school website and where they can find all key policies. As well as their own system access login details, staff will be given the login details for the staff area of the website. The importance of familiarising themselves with the aforementioned documents and policies is highlighted. The Team Leader, who will act as a mentor will be available to answer any questions that may arise.

During their contractually specified induction/probationary period, the member of staff's Team Leader / Line Manager will cover all areas included on the induction checklists, monitoring performance, knowledge and the skills necessary to do the job.

For teaching staff, their teaching timetable will reflect the strengths of each member of the team. Some of the points will have already been covered during the preliminary visit, but should be recapped to ensure full understanding of all school procedures.

Spreading out the induction period ensures that new staff are not overloaded with information all at once. Once completed, a review of each person's induction should ensure that they understand all aspects covered. The employee must adhere to and demonstrate compliance with all school policies. Training and guidance will be given throughout. The welfare and safety of children must be clearly understood and promoted at all times.



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New members of staff meet with their Line Manager / Team Leader regularly throughout the probationary period of their employment. During these meetings, they will discuss how they are settling in and review their strengths, areas for development, objectives and action plans. Where working as part of a teaching team, the new member of staff will have the opportunity to shadow/work alongside other teachers and visit other age groups. During the probationary and induction period, ahead of each meeting for teaching staff, teaching and learning observations of the new teacher with the Team Leader and members of the SLT (Senior Teacher and Deputy Headteacher) will be carried out, with a final observation conducted by the Headteacher, and formative feedback is to be provided and discussed as part of the formal induction process. Safeguarding responsibilities are revisited throughout the induction period to ensure consistent understanding and practice. Records of all discussions are kept, and the school reserves the right to extend the induction period if necessary.

When the probationary induction period is over, the school will issue a formal letter in acknowledgement of this. The school continues to encourage staff to continue their own professional development through attendance at in-service training days, by completing courses (e.g. via National College), organising peer-to-peer teaching and learning observations with colleagues, reading educational journals and magazine subscriptions held by the school, exploring blogs, vlogs and podcasts and having regular supervision meetings by the SLT. As part of their professional development, each member of staff will receive an individual meeting with the Senior Teacher in order to support their role. These meetings will be twice a year separate to their annual appraisal. The SLT conducts appraisals annually.

### **Supply Staff**

The school has a contract or agreement with the business providing supply staff stating that the business must give written confirmation that they have carried out all the required checks on these supply staff for each individual person before they begin work with the school. This also states that the school requires to see the original copy of their enhanced DBS and ID on arrival.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers will be checked according to their role, taking into account the age of the volunteer and whether they will be fully supervised. A risk assessment will be completed to assess which checks each volunteer needs. ID will always be checked on arrival. If the volunteer is in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS and Barred List check will be completed as a minimum requirement. References or an informal interview, as well as online checks, may also be completed if deemed relevant or necessary.

### **Visiting Speakers / Workshop Practitioners**

Visiting speakers and workshop practitioners are organised on a termly basis in preparation for the following term. When arranging speakers, consideration is taken to ensure that they will benefit children's learning as part of the next term's curriculum, or raise awareness in areas such as e-safety.



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A visiting speaker / workshop practitioner log is stored on the office drive and completed when booking the event. An online search is always carried out when booking speakers and when this is not possible, a phone call should be made to somebody they have worked with to ensure the credibility of the visiting speaker / workshop practitioner. Please see an example of this log below.

Name	Company	Date of Visit	Reason for Visit	Online Search <i>If not possible must carry out phone call with somebody they have worked with.</i>	Content of talk/ workshop agreed prior to event	Staff member will never be left unsupervised	Educational Value	Age Appropriateness

I.D is always checked on arrival and any visiting speaker / workshop practitioner is never left unsupervised with the children. When visitors attend the school, they will follow the school's signing in process which includes reading an overview of key documentation relating to the school's child protection and safeguarding procedures, as well as health and safety information.

### **Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information**

#### **General principles**

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, The Mulberry House School complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information and has a written guidance on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.



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### **Storage and access**

Disclosure information should be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties. Records of the checks are maintained on the school's Single Central Register (SCR).

### **Handling**

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

### **Usage**

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

### **Retention**

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. In most cases, this is checked visually and not copied or retained. Certificates are never kept on file for longer than six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints.

### **Disposal**

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

### **Acting as an Umbrella Body**

The school uses an Umbrella Body (one which countersigns applications and receives Disclosure information on behalf of Mulberry House School). We will take all reasonable steps to satisfy ourselves that they will handle, use, store, retain and dispose of Disclosure information in full compliance with the DBS Code and in full accordance with this guidance.